



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Update on Aftermath of Miller Chemical Fire

DEP Continues to Monitor Cleanup Efforts.

Harrisburg – The Department of Environmental Protection today issued the following update on the cleanup efforts and environmental impacts of Monday's fire at a chemical and fertilizer plant Adams County. Miller Chemical and Fertilizer Company is a manufacturer of water soluble fertilizers used for commercial agricultural crops as well a supplier of soil mixtures. Due to the large amount of runoff from the firefighting efforts, contaminated runoff has entered Slagle's Run and the South Branch of the Conewago Creek:

- Discoloration and foaming is present in Slagle's Run and the South Branch of the Conewago Creek. The discoloration may vary from red to purple or brown depending on the depth of the water and the amount of sediment. Foaming should be expected near low head dams and other areas of disturbance such as rocks and rapids.
- The runoff contains high concentrations of nutrients and organic matter from the fertilizer products stored and packaged at the facility. Due to the high concentration of organic carbon, the department is seeing low levels of dissolved oxygen in some areas of Slagle's Run and the South Branch of the Conewago. With the presence of ammonia compounds in the water we are seeing and expect to see distressed aquatic life including fish kills.
- The discoloration and foam is expected to continue until the material can be stopped from entering the waterways. Attempts are underway to limit runoff from entering Slagle's Run. Due to the large volume of runoff involved this may take several days to complete.
- While the waterways are discolored citizens should refrain from recreating or fishing
- Public drinking water supplies in the area are not affected. The New Oxford Municipal Authority's water intake located on the Conewago Creek remains closed. New Oxford is currently receiving water through an interconnection with the York Water Authority. Mandatory restrictions remain in effect for customers of the New Oxford system.
- At this time the impacts to private wells are expected to be minimal if the wells are properly constructed and cased. DEP does not regulate private wells. Owners of private wells should monitor their water for discoloration and contact the department if they see visible discoloration, 717-705-4700. If an owner of a private well wishes to take further action they can work with a private lab to monitor for Nitrate, Nitrite, Iron, Manganese and Total Organic Carbon (TOC).
- For more information on private drinking wells visit www.dep.state.pa.us.

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